

DR. ZIMMERMAN

1887 - 1925

"THE CHURCH YOU CAN'T FORGET". This is the motto of Christ Lutheran Church located at Charles and Hill Streets in South Baltimore; a Church which has members spread all over the City of Baltimore and far into Baltimore, Carroll, Anne Arundel and Howard Counties. Even the former members of the Church keep posted through the weekly publication of the Church Visitor or through word of mouth of friends and relatives so they can keep in contact with this Church that people can't forget.

The motto itself is attributed to Mr. Gilson H. Metcalfe and appeared on the cover of the second Church Visitor dated October 11, 1925. The first pastor of the Church, Dr. Leander M. Zimmerman, composed a poem entitled "The Church You Can't Forget" for the 40th anniversary booklet and it was printed on the front of the Visitor of September 25, 1927. Later the poem was revised for the 50th and 61st anniversaries.

What is behind this motto? What has made this a Church that people remember; a Church that is known throughout Baltimore, around Maryland and far into the Lutheran Church of America. A Church that is claimed as a part of people far and near. One explains "Oh, I was married in that Church". Another, "My father was baptised in Christ Church". Still another, "Do you know so-and-so at the Church"? Some older person may even say, "Oh, you mean Zimmerman's Church in South Baltimore". What keeps the magnetism alive in this family of God? To understand the history of Christ Church we must go back to the middle of the 19th century in Baltimore and look at conditions among the Lutheran bodies of the City. Immigrants had been pouring into this port city and many with no knowledge of the geography or economies of the interior, remained right where they had disembarked in South Baltimore. Many worked within a radius of one-half mile of Hanover and Hamburg Streets. One place these displaced persons found solace and comfort was in the Church. Since many of the immigrants were German, the Roman Catholic Church with its familiar Latin or the German Speaking Lutheran

Churches made these people feel at home. These German speaking Churches grew along with English speaking Lutheran Churches.

Between 1870-1910 the Lutheran Churches of Baltimore were in trouble with the problem of the German language. Some agreement had to be reached between the English speaking and German speaking Churches. The children of the immigrants, as well as the immigrants themselves, were learning English, habits and ways were changing and the English speaking Churches were changing some of the traditions they had in the old homeland. Many of the German Churches wanted to unite with the English ones, but some others were afraid they would be swallowed up by the prevailing lax and un-Lutheran tendencies. Therefore, a German synod was formed to keep the traditional German speaking Churches pure. However, it met with failure because the strong leaders of the German speaking Churches did not condone it and refused to join. The small German Churches without the guidance of strong leaders were then enticed by the aggressive Evangelical Synod of North America, which sent its best men out seeking these floundering congregations, so that the once Lutheran Churches became affiliated with what eventually became the United Church of Christ.

The boundaries of Baltimore City in this period of 1860-70 were North Avenue on the north, Greenmount Avenue on the east, Monroe Street on the west and the waterfront on the south. In this area there were seven Maryland Synod Congregations, all of whom recognized the need for an organization to aid in establishing new Lutheran Congregations in Baltimore City and to assist in liquidating the debts of Lutheran Missions in the City and its vicinity. Thus the "Lutheran Church Extension Society of Baltimore City" was founded in 1887 and was maintained by voluntary contributions from individuals and congregations in the City.



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In 1887 this body made a canvass and found a need for an English speaking Lutheran Church in South Baltimore. At its first meeting on May 20, 1887 the Board of Managers appointed a committee to look over the field in South Baltimore to begin a Sunday School.

In the fall of that same year a newly ordained minister by the name of Alexander M. Zimmerman was asked by the Society to work in the South Baltimore area. While the young Pastor Zimmerman made his survey, the Board at its November 28 meeting asked for and received permission to rent a hall - Triumph Hall located at 1240 Light Street for \$20.00 per month to accommodate a Sunday School. The property committee investigated the premises and on December 12 reported that the rent included lighting and heat. Chairs for the service would be furnished free of charge by a doctor who rented the hall during the week for his practice. The committee decided that if more chairs were needed they would be purchased, along with any other necessities, spending not more than \$100.00.

The industrious Rev. Zimmerman began his work on December 1, 1887. On December 13, 1887 a meeting was held by teachers in the home of Mr. Charles G. Kriel, 5 West Henrietta Street to discuss the organization of a Sunday School. Contacting the people of the neighborhood, all were urged to join together in the first service of the newly formed mission on Sunday, December 18, 1887. At the 11:00 A.M. service there were 150 people in attendance, while 115 returned in the evening for the 7:30 P.M. worship. On that same auspicious occasion there were 97 pupils in the Sunday School at 9:30 A.M.

During the next two months the diligent young Pastor Zimmerman made over 600 pastoral calls, averaging 10 per day, 7 days a week, 60 consecutive days.

Finally he was able to send out invitations requesting interested people to be present at the services and organization of Christ English Lutheran Church Sunday, February 5, 1888, 11:00 A.M., with the admonition "Do not let inclement weather keep you from attending". With a charter membership of 220 people, consisting of 150 received by confirmation or renewal of faith and 70 from

St. Mark's, Second and St. Stephen's Churches nearby, the following men were elected by ballot to its first council:

Elders - Mr. G. W. Metcalfe

Deacons - Mr. E. M. Rice

Mr. A. H. Weaver

Mr. L. Schaffer

Mr. R. Ritterhoff

Mr. I. H. Robertson

Mr. J. M. Hurmann

Mr. Wm. Kothe, Treas.

Meanwhile, the Lutheran Church Extension Society watching the progress of the Church reported at its meeting of January 30, 1888 of the start of a new Lutheran Church in South Baltimore and at its next meeting on February 3 conferred with the official body of Christ Church in the matter of securing a suitable site for its services. By February 19, 1888, 35 additional people joined, making the total after eleven weeks work of 250. The records of March 3 showed an additional gain of 30 and again on April 1, 75 more making now a total of 355 in just four months. Clearly Triumph Hall was becoming too small for this growing band of believers, so the search continued for a suitable place of worship. With the failure of an attempt to secure the Light St. Presbyterian Church, the Society recommended at its July 21 meeting that the Hill Street M.E. Church be purchased for \$18,000, subject to ground rent.

Records of a Baltimore Sun newspaper account, dated April 19, 1869 announcing the dedication of the New Sailors City Bethel of the Methodist Episcopal Church on a lot with a frontage of 57 ft., which was bought for \$4,080, on Hill Street near Charles Street proves that this was the building which the Lutheran Church Extension Society recommended. Thus, a church building approximately 20 years old was selected as the home and permanent spot for the Christ Lutheran Church.

The congregation paid a cash sum of \$3,000 with the balance due on Jan. 1, 1889. The local Society donated \$1,000, plus \$500 loaned by one member (another refused to do so stating that the infant church lacked sufficient security) and \$500 loaned by the officers of the organization. The Lutheran Church Extension

Society loaned the Church \$1,500. The congregation proposed to raise another \$1,500 in addition to the request that each congregation in the City of Baltimore allow the Rev. Zimmerman to canvass its members for the benefit of Christ English Lutheran Church and all money collected to be paid through the local Church Extension Society to go toward the \$1,500. A general renovation including a new roof, walls and ceiling frescoed, new carpets, new pulpit furniture and repairing the organ, amounted to \$2,000. Also during this time the building adjoining the church was rebuilt to house the Sunday School. On August 12, 1888 the first service was held. The dedication service was on November 25, 1888 and on November 29 the congregation held a meeting and voted to make the church self sustaining. On December 1, 1888, just a year from the day the Rev. Zimmerman started his work, the church was self-supporting. One source of revenue came from the Ladies' Aid Society, which was organized early in 1888. This group which met the first Monday of each month, including July and August, at 8:00 P.M., held a bazaar on October 15-19 (five days) and realized a profit of \$1,200. These good ladies gave the carpeting, pulpit furniture and had the organ repaired, while the church paid for the new roof and had the walls and ceiling frescoed. The ladies also gave a sum of \$700.00 while the Sunday School gave \$150.00 toward the repairs.

At the first anniversary held on December 23, 1888 at 7:30 P.M., a list of the activities and important dates reflected a very busy year, as follows:

December 1, 1887 - Rev. L. M. Zimmerman began

- " 13 Meeting for organization of Sunday School
- " 18 First meeting of Sunday School (97 people)
- " 25 Christmas entertainment by lady teachers

February 5, 1888 - Organization of the Church. Young Men's Bible

Class presented pulpit bible and hymnal book

- " 19 Young Ladies' Bible Class presented silver
communion service

March 15, 1888 - Young people gave musical and social to
congregation

June 15 Sunday School excursion to Tolchester

July 9 Sunday School gave \$150 for Church building

August 1 First meeting in Sunday School House on
Hill Street

October 15-19 Ladies' Aid Bazaar

November First Thank Offering

December 1, 1888 Self Supporting

On the second anniversary, which was held on December 15, 1889, the chancel was decorated with potted plants and cut flowers. The church was decorated with palms, vines and flowers and on each side of the pulpit was a large bouquet of choice flowers. The Rev. Zimmerman preached a sermon with the text "Well Done Go Forward". An announcement was made that the debt of the past year decreased from \$2500 to \$1000. The Ladies' Aid Society, ever busy, gave \$885.50. the Willing Workers (a small group of people who assisted the pastor where and whenever they were called upon) gave \$168.75, the Young Ladies' Bible Class gave \$25.00 and the Birds of Promise (a Sunday School children's group) gave 10.00. Christmas during those infant years was a time of great rejoicing. An early morning service at 6:00 A.M. was always held on Christmas Day, at which time the Pastor presented each member with a booklet of Christmas Greetings. On the Tuesday or Wednesday following the holy day a Sunday School entertainment was held for the benefit of all. It was on the festival of the second Christmas of Christ Church that Pastor Zimmerman presented to the church a musical 6 ft. artificial Christmas tree, made in Germany. The music box still operates after some 80 years and although the tree loses needles every year, the tree and music box can be seen in the Church parlor every year at Christmas.

The Sunday School had expanded so that there were business and study meetings for the teachers every second Wednesday at 9:00 o'clock following the prayer meeting. On Monday evenings the catechetical class was held by the Pastor at 8:00 P.M. This along with the meetings of the Ladies' Aid Society and the Church Council kept the church doors open on four nights of some weeks. In 1892 a church bulletin stated that "The Church is not endowed but that instead it depended upon God for its support and upon the good will and offerings of its faithful. There is no pew rent - by systematic in giving." With this advice the successful congregation was able to celebrate Jubilee Day on January 31, 1892 with the announcement that the Church was debt free - just four years after its founding.

To keep the people informed of the activities of the busy Church the minister in 1895 published "The Pastor's Indicator", a four-sided pamphlet with three parts pertaining to news of the church and one side with advertisements of businesses in and around South Baltimore. One bit of news published was the announcement of a Sunday School excursion to Bay Ridge on July 20, 1893 with the promise of free ice cream.

With the increase in activities, drawing more and more people to the Church, changes had to be made in the physical plant so that by the summer of 1894, the Infant Department had its Sunday School room enlarged, a house on Hill Street was purchased for the sexton and the exterior appearance of the Church was altered. A metal cornice was hung on the gables facing Hill Street and the squared off windows were restyled to the Gothic design with stained glass windows. Inside the building the Chancel was moved from the south to the east wall, where a recess of 32 ft. x 14 ft. was cut. With this change and an extension of 22 ft. in the Nave of the church, along with the addition of a south gallery to correspond to the one at the north end, which was extended 7 ft. more seating

space was allowed so new furniture was added. The organ was repainted and memorials and gifts, which included internal furnishings of the Church were secured independent of the regular subscriptions of the people. Many of these gifts are still in the Church building today.

Antique brass eagle lectern - Gift of Rev. Zimmerman and a few friends

Two prismatic chandeliers

Antique cast brass candelabra

Marble baptismal font

Antique bronze pulpit

Rods and curtains for choir (in Church)

Organ screen

Brass hand rails in vestibule

Gas brackets

The Church was rededicated October 14, 1894. During this same month, on the 11th day, the Deaconess Society was organized. Seven unmarried women were "set apart" as Parish Sisters of the Church, having on the badge of the office a gold and enamel maltese cross. With a probationary period of two years these ladies reported weekly to the pastor. They were in charge of the altar, service among the sick, troubled, wayward children and the poor. They sent "Sunshine Flowers" to the sick and made sunshine visits. They also directed the Christian Kindergarten every Friday evening without cost. Children were taught spiritual and moral truths.

By the 7th anniversary held in 1894, there were 915 members.

455 children baptised

176 couples married

212 buried

11,000 visits

with ever increasing needs and expenditures the parishioners, along with their regular offerings, supplemented whenever they could. The Ladies Aid Society continued making money to be used in the Church by having bazaars to which were added oyster suppers held at the Cross Street Market Hall. In 1895 at one such supper, held November 12, 13 and 14, the men of the Church had a table at the bazaar. Admission and supper at these gatherings was 25¢.

For the 10th anniversary, the Rev. Zimmerman wrote a souvenir booklet praising the people and their good works and on December 2, 1897, \$1,050 was paid to liquidate the Church debt. Indebtedness now was \$1,200 with ground rent of church and parsonage \$135.00 per annum. During these ten years the congregation raised \$49,000 for all purposes, \$4,200 of this was for benevolence. The Rev. Zimmerman said "let no one grow weary in well doing". By the 12th anniversary all debts were again liquidated.

At the 15th anniversary, held on December 14, 1902, the Pastor in his sermon said he was worried about the effectiveness of his ministering to the same people for fifteen years. He told how he studied to give good sermons, worked in a wider field in the homes of the sick, the bereaved and the dying. He spoke of the hundreds of silent voices "going about doing good". A reception followed. Dr. Zimmerman greeted people for 1½ hours. His worry was needless.

As was earlier stated, the Thank Offering was started in 1883 and in 1904 the Rev. Zimmerman mentioned it stating that it was better to give money in this manner than to have the "old time" oyster supper and bazaar - \$609.91 of the Thank offering that year was used to trim the walls of the exterior of the Church and put a fence between the lecture room and the blacksmith shop. Also the alley and yard behind the Church were repaved. The rest of the offering was used

for the Home for the Aged, to assist the hungry and helpless in the world and to support missionaries.

Not every organization pertained strictly to religion. One group formed in 1903 and still very much alive was the Men's Bowling League. Dr. Zimmerman felt that the men should get together for a sociable evening once a week for fun and fellowship. Of course, if anyone thought it was too secular, reference was made to the historical notation that bowling was originally a religious ceremony during the 3rd or 4th century in the cloisters of the cathedrals. Parishoners were asked to place a pin at the end of the cloister. When a ball was rolled and a hit was made that indicated the bowler was leading a clean life. A miss called for more faithful attendance in church. Martin Luther himself was an enthusiastic bowler. Our men started with four teams, five on a team and have bowled duck pins, ten pins and back to duck pins in eight different places. The League had a growth to twelve teams in 1940 and is now down to the present eight teams. At one time they even had a paper of their own "The Strike" edited by George C. Emerich. The first issue was on December 5, 1926.

December 15, 1907 marked the 20th anniversary of this great Christ English Lutheran Church and the beloved pastor, ever encouraging his flock, gave a tribute to them. He spoke about their faithful attendance, stating that "rare was there an empty pew during church services, with even the Wednesday night prayer service having large gatherings". He praised the people for their diligence in work and worship and commented on how the finances were all being met through weekly envelope, communion envelope and thank offering, as well as the plate offering and special gifts. Not all the money was used for the Church, part of it going toward hospitals and inner mission work. Each organization was praised. The council was working in "peace and harmony", with the same treasurer for twenty years, along with "good and faithful secretaries".

The Sunday Church School was considered next in importance to the pulpit with an average attendance of 717, the highest being 869 on an April morning; 225 scholars were listed on the honor roll. He thought of the Church and Sunday School as being "banded together for the interest of all worthy causes that channel through the church proper".

The Ladies' Aid Society was referred to as "a mighty power for good". The Rev. Zimmerman spoke of some people holding that the women should be in the pulpit, but not being one for Women's Lib., he stated that our women had no such aspirations. The Parish Deaconess Society was in charge of the Altar and service to others, finding joy in sacrifice; also conducted Christian Kindergarten every Friday evening.

One strong religious group was Junior Christian Endeavor, organized to teach children of Jesus and his love. Before a child could become a member he was given a trial membership card on which was stated a promise to attend the meetings and to be orderly while present. The calendar for the year 1904 listed this group meeting on Sunday afternoon at 2:30, while the Senior Endeavor, a group to which the former Junior Christian Endeavor members belonged, met on Wednesday evening at 7:30. Both groups developed the Christian Character and the enlargement of the sphere of individual influence in Church work.

Groups such as the Ladies' Guild, Men's League (held meetings three times a year - January, May and October and had various programs), Ladies' Visiting Committee and the Sunday School Visiting Committee were composed of silent workers who held no meetings, had no officers, but worked remembering the Lord's words "What wilt thou have me do"? The choir under the direction of the director and organist gave the Church music that was "different from all others". Last but not least were mentioned the ushers who were in charge of the seating of the church goers and the electric light attendant who was "even at his post managing the lighting of the House of God".

The influence of this great body of believers was beginning to be felt around the City of Baltimore. It had a voice among the Lutheran bodies of Maryland. For instance, in 1910 the Laymen's Movement wanted to change the system of getting money from each Lutheran congregation. The Christ Church secretary responded with a note reminding the body that "only seven churches" pay more in apportionment than we do, only four pay more in general benevolence and of the 95 pastorates in the Maryland Synod we are one of 28 who pay in excess of the appropriation". The secretary stated that "we are ready to respond. That we are missionary minded in spirit and deed, but feel we cannot go along with request of changing way of getting money".

The Baltimore City newspapers were aware of the importance of this Church and frequently ran articles about the happenings of the people. On July 17, 1915 a whole page of pictures and captions showed Pastor Zimmerman and his flock of 2,000 (members and friends) gathered at Grove 10 in Druid Hill Park from early morning through twilight, downing 7 bushels of peanuts, 1200 blocks of ice cream and 50 pounds of candy.

In an article in the Baltimore Evening Sun in 1918 entitled "A Church Downtown Doing Work All Around" it was stated that the purpose of Christ Church was to be as great a blessing as possible to as many people as possible, as long as possible". With these words instilled in the people along with the phrase printed on the announcement cards of Pastor Zimmerman, "every seat free - everybody welcome", Christ Lutheran Church had become so successful that with a benevolence of \$19,358.50 in the year 1918, it had the largest communicant membership of any Lutheran Church in the City of Baltimore.

Feed my sheep -- preach the Word. This was the two-fold purpose of the life work of Leander M. Zimmerman, the founder and pastor of Christ Lutheran Church for over 35 years. He was born on August 29, 1860 on a farm in Manchester, Maryland, the youngest of twelve children and the seventh son of a seventh son. After attending rural public school young Leander went on to Gettysburg College and graduated in 1884. Aspiring to be a minister he went to Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, graduated in 1887 and was ordained in Williamsport, Maryland, October 8, 1887. His first and only pastorate began when he was called by the Board of Home Missions of the General Synod of the Lutheran Church to organize an English speaking Lutheran Church in South Baltimore. The young pastor began his work in South Baltimore, December 1, 1887. The bachelor pastor took up residence at 521 South Hanover Street until April 1, 1905 when he moved a block away to 421 South Hanover Street. For \$12.50 per month (in advance) he had heat and light, sole use of the parlor or front room second floor and use of the bathroom. Calls were answered at the door. His room was cleaned once a week, but the Rev. Zimmerman was obliged to dust his room and make his bed daily. He ate his meals out, many of them in the homes of his parishoners, in fact on Sunday families would vie for the chance to have their pastor as their dinner guest.

To build such a large loyal congregation this eager young man with considerable grace, charm and concentration made over 3400 visitations in his first year as a minister. In just three weeks he had gained enough support to hold his first service. Within a year from the date of beginning his life's work with 400 members his church was self-supporting. His answer to inquiries as to the great accomplishment was - "Surely the Lord has led us thus far".

But, Leander M. Zimmerman worked for the Lord. He published little booklets every four months, giving the dates and times of services, with the sermon topics for every service, approximately 32 sermon titles in advance. To encourage the people to attend services the pastor sent post cards encouraging his flock to come to church because, even in those early days, distance was a problem. On one card he wrote "you have a long distance to come, but I rejoice that distance has thus far been no barrier to you".

This man of God, who had no secretary and no paid assistant, received a salary of only \$1,000 per year, with a week's vacation after Easter and the month of August. He was always an example to the people in Church and on the street. His shoes were always shined, there was always a crease in his trousers and his beard (which he grew to make himself look older) was neatly trimmed. He never crossed his legs while sitting in the Church chancel. While making his rounds he carried a pocket full of candy to give to the neighborhood children, and often on his visits he would leave a house carrying some food or clothing to give to someone along the way. Even on the Sunday School picnics the beloved pastor was surrounded by people.

The Rev. Zimmerman knew the power of the press and used it to his advantage. His sermons from the pulpit reached hundreds of people, while the printed message exposed him to thousands. Newspaper articles by the score were written quoting from his sermons. Innumerable press items and booklets relating to better, holier, cleaner and more helpful lives were written and published by him. Four books - "Cordelia" - a sweet and simple love story. "Dot" - a romance of today (1916), "Sparks" and "Roses Will Bloom Again" were also written by this ambitious young man.

In addition to the work in his own congregation, Pastor Zimmerman was also active in the Maryland Synod of the Lutheran Church. He became President of the Maryland Synod in 1900 and was also for many years President of the Board of the Lutheran

Deaconess Motherhouse in Baltimore, of which he was a founder. He was Vice President of the Board of Home Missions and for more than 25 years was a member of the Board of Trustees of Gettysburg Theological Seminary. His progressive spirit, great ability, devotion and strong preaching, which were recognized as being in advance of the age in which he lived, led Susquehanna University to confer the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity on him in 1901. Later Dr. Zimmerman became a member of the Society of Science, the Letters and Arts of London and the Gettysburg College Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

In 1918 with Christ English Lutheran Church flourishing, the overworked pastor, fearing a physical breakdown, sent a letter of resignation to the Church with the idea of concentrating his Christian efforts as head of the Baltimore Lutheran Inner Mission Society. When the congregation heard of the letter it was shocked. What would Christ Church do without its beloved Pastor? There was a fear that many of the people would stop coming to the Church after he resigned.

The Church Council voted to refuse the resignation, but instead gave the Pastor periodic vacations to relieve the pressures of his many overwhelming duties. So for seven more years Pastor Zimmerman remained to serve the congregation of almost 2000 - the largest Lutheran Church in Baltimore. But, even with the reduced work load, his health was really failing so on April 19, 1925 after having served his one and only pastorate for over 35 years the 65 year old Christian giant gave his final sermon to a tearful congregation; 1800 parishoners crowded in the auditorium, galleries and Sunday School rooms. With money left to him by one of his physician brothers, who had just recently died, and a gift of \$5,000 in appreciation of his work from a woman in Baltimore, who was not even a member of his congregation, he continued the work of the Lord through his poems and booklets.

The congregation also gave him a pension for life in the amount of \$25,000. Upon his retirement "The Lutheran issue of May 7, 1925 published an article about him in which he was referred to as "Baltimore's greatest pastor for a generation" and that he was known throughout the country for his books, tracts and articles. In the March 20, 1925 issue of the Baltimore American newspaper an article stated "All Baltimore without regard for creed or race joins in the hope that he may be spared and that to him may be granted strength to continue in his own way to serve God, the country and this community". And in the Baltimore News, March 18, 1925 was stated "Dr. Zimmerman's retirement is a real loss to Baltimore. You hear about downtown church problems and how to keep churches going in old sections usually ending in a lament that little can be done. For 37 years he held the battlefront and made his fight. There is no downtown problem when a man leads the forces of righteousness". Of course, the now aging Pastor continued to serve Christ Church as Pastor Emeritus. He was always present on Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, preaching the 47th consecutive Thanksgiving sermon in November 1934. Even a serious operation during the winter of 1938 could not keep him away for more than a half year. When Dr. Zimmerman was almost 82 years old he underwent another operation in February of 1941, but again was able to return to preach and give his little booklets of poems to his beloved Christian brethren. He preached his last Thanksgiving sermon at Christ Church in 1949, at which time the congregation received the booklet "Lighted Candles". In June 1950 he slipped and fractured the end of his pelvic bone and so he moved into the National Lutheran Home for the Aged in Washington, D.C. Thanksgiving and Anniversary Sundays the congregation of Christ Church was not honored with the ailing Pastor's presence, but heard a transcribed message from him instead. The "Daddy" Pastor returned to his Church -- Christ Church -- at almost 90 years of age, and once more on Easter Sunday 1950 when he gave his last sermon.

During Dr. Zimmerman's years of retirement he was especially honored by the members of Christ Church on several of his birthdays. On his 75th in 1935, the people gave \$3,000 to beautify the foyer of the Parish House being built, which was named for him. Five years later \$4,000 was donated to the Gettysburg Seminary Chapel for the altar and reredos and one year later \$500 more was given for the cross, candlesticks and flower vases, all in the name of Leander M. Zimmerman. A great banquet at the Lord Baltimore Hotel was held for Dr. Zimmerman's 87th birthday, at which time he received a beautiful bound book of greetings and was honored by a gift of \$1,500 to The National Lutheran Home for the Aged in Washington on his 90th birthday anniversary, at a special sponsored service, \$1,379.68 was received from the people.

One year and a half later on March 10, 1952, when this servant of the Lord was in his 92nd year, he "went home to Jesus". More than 4000 people viewed his body, with some 1500 people, including the Governor and his wife, pastors, seven of the ten ministerial sons and many deaconesses attending the funeral services. The words of the Pastor of Christ Church, Dr. John L. Deeken, sum up what everyone felt about Dr. Leander M. Zimmerman -- "Our sense of loss is very great, but our hearts are filled with gratitude. God gave us Dr. Zimmerman for a long, long time. Not many are privileged to sojourn on this earth for more than 91 years and still fewer fill their lives with such faithful services for the Lord and Master and the children of man. Through Dr. Zimmerman's ministry, more than that of any other person, God has given us our beloved Church Home. Thousands have been drawn closer to God by his ministry through the spoken and written word. His zeal for the Kingdom was untiring and continued to the very end of his life. Books could be written about his life and ministry".

Work Copy

Our Z immerman

1887-1925

"The Church you can't forget". This is the motto of Christ Lutheran Church located at Charles and Hill Streets in South Baltimore; a Church which has members spread all over the city, ^{of Balto and into} ~~far~~ ^{Carroll,} into Baltimore, Anne Arundel and Howard Counties. Even the former members of the Church keep posted through the weekly publication of the Church Visitor or through word of mouth of friends and relatives so they can keep in contact with this Church that people can't forget.

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To understand the history of Christ Church we must go back to the middle of the 19th century in Baltimore and look at conditions among the Lutheran bodies of the City. Immigrants had been pouring into this port city and many with no knowledge of the geography or economies of the interior, remained right where they had ^{dis-}embarked in South Baltimore, ^M many worked ^{with} in a radius of one-half mile of Hanover and Hamburg Streets. One place these displaced persons found solace and comfort was in the Church. Since many of the immigrants were German, the Roman Catholic Church with its familiar Latin or the German speaking Lutheran

Churches made these people feel at home. These German speaking Churches grew with along/English speaking Lutheran Churches.

Between 1870-1910 the Lutheran Churches of Baltimore were in trouble with the problem of the German language. Some agreement had to be reached between the English speaking and German speaking Churches. The children of the immigrants, as well as the immigrants themselves, were learning English, ^H Habits and ways were changing and the English speaking Churches were changing some of the traditions they had in the old homeland. Many of the German Churches wanted to unite with the English ones, but some others were afraid they would be swallowed up by the prevailing lax and un-Lutheran tendencies. Therefore, a German Synod was formed to keep the traditional German speaking Churches pure. However, it met with failure because the strong leaders of the German speaking Churches did not condone it and refused to join. The small German Churches without the guidance of strong leaders were then enticed by the aggressive Evangelical Synod of North ^{America which} Avenue, ~~who~~ sent its best men out, seeking these floundering congregations, so that the once Lutheran Churches became affiliated ~~with~~ ^{what eventually became} with the United Church of Christ.

The boundaries of Baltimore City in this period of 1860-70 were North Avenue on the north, Greenmount Avenue on the east, Monroe Street on the west and the waterfront on the south. In this area there were seven Maryland Synod Congregations, all of whom recognized the need for an organization to aid in establishing new Lutheran Congregations in Baltimore City and to assist in liquidating the debts of Lutheran Missions in the City and its vicinity. Thus the "Lutheran Church Extension Society of Baltimore City" was founded in 1887 and was ~~to be~~ maintained by voluntary contributions from individuals ~~and~~ and congregations in the city.

In 1887 this body made a canvass~~and~~ and found a need for an English speaking Lutheran Church in South Baltimore. At its first meeting on May 20, 1887 the Board of Managers appointed a committee to look over the field in South Baltimore to begin a Sunday School.

In the fall of that same year a newly ordained minister by the name of Leander M. Zimmerman was ^{asked} ~~lured~~ by the society to work in the South Baltimore ^{area} ~~field~~. While the young Pastor Zimmerman made his survey, the board at its November 28 meeting asked for and received permission to rent a hall - Triumph Hall located at 1240 Light Street for \$20.00 per month to accom^modate a Sunday School. The property committee investigated the premises and on December 12 reported that the rent included lighting and heat. Chairs for the service would be ⁱⁿ ~~furn~~ished free of charge by a doctor who rented the hall during the week for his practice. The committee decided that if more chairs were needed they would be purchased, along with any other necessities, spending not more than \$100.00.

The industrious Rev. Zimmerman began his work on December 1, 1887. On December 13, 1887 a meeting was held ^{by teachers} in the home of Mr. Charles G. ^{Kriel} ~~Kriel~~, 5 West Henrietta Street to discuss the organization ^{of a Sunday School} ~~by the teachers of a Sunday School~~. Contacting the people of the neighborhood, all were urged to join together in the first service of the newly formed mission on Sunday, December 18, 1887. At the 11:00 A.M. service there were 150 people in attendance, while 115 returned in the evening for the 7:30 P.M. worship. On that same ^{aus} ~~auspicious~~ occasion there were 97 ^{pupils} ~~students~~ in the Sunday School at 9:30 A.M.

During the next two months the diligent young Pastor Zimmerman made over 600 pastoral calls, averaging 10 per day, 7 days a week, 60 consecutive days. Finally he was able to send out invitations requesting interested people to be present at the service and organization of Christ English Lutheran Church, Sunday, February 5, 1888, 11:00 A.M., with the admonition "Do not let inclement weather keep you from attending". With a charter membership of 220 people, consisting of 150 received by confirmation or renewal of faith and 70 from

St. Mark's, Second and St. Stephen's Churches nearby.

by ballot
The following men were elected to its first council:

Elders - Mr. C. W. Metcalfe

Deacons: Mr. E. M. Rice

Mr. A. H. Weaver

Mr. L. Schaffer

Mr. F. Ritterhoff

Mr. I. H. Robertson

Mr. J. M. Hurmann

Mr. Wm. Kothe, Treas.

Meanwhile the ^{Lutheran} L. Ch. Ex. Soc. ^{Timothy} watching the progress of the Church reported at its meeting on Jan. 30, 1888 of ^{the} a start of a new Lutheran Church in South Baltimore and at its next meeting on February 3 conferred with the official body of Christ Church in the matter of securing a suitable site for its services. By February 19, 1888, 35 additional people joined, making the total after eleven weeks work of 250. The records of March 3 showed an additional gain of 30 and again on April 1, 75 more making ~~now~~ a total of 355 in just four months. Clearly Triumph Hall was becoming too small for this growing band of believers, so the search continued for a suitable place of worship. With the failure of ^{an} the attempt to secure the Light St. Presbyterian Church, the Society recommended at its July 21 meeting that the Hill Street M.E. Church be purchased for \$18,000, subject to ground rent.

Records of a Baltimore Sun newspaper account, dated April 19, 1869 announcing the dedication of the New Sailors City Bethel of the Methodist Episcopal Church on a lot with a frontage of 57 ft., which was bought for \$4,080 on Hill Street near Charles Street, proves that this was the building which the ^{Lutheran} L. Ch. Ex. Soc. ^{Timothy} committee recommended. Thus, a church building, approximately 20 years old, was selected as the home and permanent spot for the Christ Lutheran Church. The congregation paid a cash sum of \$3,000 with the balance due on Jan. 1, 1889. The local Society donated \$1,000, plus \$500 loaned by one member (another refused to do so stating that the infant church lacked sufficient security) and \$500 loaned by the officers of the organization. ^{Lutheran} The General-Synod Church

Church Extension Society loaned the Church \$1500.00. The congregation proposed to raise another \$1500.00, in addition to the request that each congregation in the City of Baltimore allow ^{the} Rev. Zimmerman to canvass its members for the benefit of Christ English Lutheran Church and all money collected to be paid through the local Church Extension Society to go toward the \$1500.00. A general renovation, including a new roof, walls and ceiling frescoed, new carpets, new pulpit furniture and the repairing of the organ, amounted to \$2,000.00. Also during this time the building adjoining the church was rebuilt to house the Sunday School. On August 12, 1888 the first service was held. The dedication service was on November 25, 1888 and on November 29 the congregation held a meeting and voted to make the church self sustaining. On December 1, 1888, just a year from the day ^{the} Rev. Zimmerman started his work, the church was self supporting. One source of revenue came from the Ladies Aid Society, which was organized early in 1888. This group which met the first Monday of each month, including July and August, at 8.00 P.M., held a bazaar on Oct. 15-19 -- five days -- and realized a profit of \$1,200.00. These good ladies gave the carpeting, pulpit furniture and had the organ repaired, while the church paid for the new roof and the frescoed walls and ceiling. The ladies also gave a sum of \$700.00, while the Sunday School gave \$150.00 toward the repairs. At the first anniversary held on December 23, 1888 at 7:30 P.M., a list of the activities and important dates reflected a very busy year, as follows:

December 1, 1887 - Rev. ^{E.M.} Zimmerman began

- " 13 Meeting for organization of Sunday School
- " 18 First meeting of Sunday School (⁹⁷74 people)
- " 25 Christmas entertainment by lady teachers

February 5, 1888 - Organization of the Church. Young Men's Bible Class

- presented pulpit bible and hymnal book
- " 19 Young ladies Bible Class presented silver communion service

March 15, 1888 - Young people gave musical and social to congregation
 June 15 Sunday School excursion to Tolchester
 July 9 Sunday School gave \$150.00 for Church building
 August 12 First meeting in Sunday School house on Hill Street
 October 15-19 Ladies Aid Society Bazaar
 November First Thank Offering
 December 1, 1888 Self Supporting

On the second anniversary, which was held on December 15, 1889, the chancel was decorated with potted plants and cut flowers. The church was decorated with palms, vines and flowers and on each side of the pulpit was a large bouquet of choice flowers. The Rev. Zimmerman preached a sermon with the text "Well Done-Go Forward". An announcement was made that the debt of the past year decreased from \$2500 to \$1000. The Ladies Aid Society, ever busy, gave \$885.50, the Willing Workers (a small group of people who assisted the pastor where and whenever they were called upon) gave \$168.75, the Young Ladies Bible Class gave \$25.00 and the Birds of Promise (a Sunday School children's group) gave \$10.00. Christmas during those infant years was a time of great rejoicing. An early morning service at 6:00 A.M. was always held on Christmas Day, at which time the Pastor presented each member with a booklet of Christmas Greetings. On the Tuesday or Wednesday following the holy day a Sunday School entertainment was held for the benefit of all. It was on the festival of the second Christmas of Christ Church that Pastor Zimmerman presented to the church a musical 6 ft. ~~artificial Christmas tree. Although the music box has long since broken and the tree loses needles every year, the tree (now 80 years old) can still be seen in the Church parlor every year at Christmas.~~

Also, beginning in the year 1891 the Wednesday Prayer Meetings were organized.

made in Germany.
 -6- (Dr. Zimmerman)

(artificial Christmas tree. The music box still operates after some 80 years and although the tree loses needles every year, the tree and music box can be seen in the Church parlor every year at Christmas.

The Sunday School had expanded so that there were business and study meetings for the teachers every second Wednesday at 9:00 o'clock following the prayer meeting. On Monday evenings the catechetical class was held by the Pastor at 8:00 P.M.. This along with the meetings of the Ladies Aid Society and the Church Council kept the church doors open on four nights of some weeks. In 1892 a church bulletin stated that "the Church is not endowed but that instead it depended upon God for its support and upon the good will and offerings of its faithful. There is no pew rent -- be systematic in giving". With this advice the successful congregation was able to celebrate Jubilee Day on January 31, 1892 with the announcement that the Church was debt free - just four years after its founding.

To keep the people informed ^{of} ^{activities} as to the ~~doings~~ of the busy Church the minister in 1895 published "The Pastor's Indicator," a four sided pamphlet with three parts pertaining to news of the church and one side with advertisements of businesses in and around South Baltimore. One bit of news published was the announcement of a Sunday School excursion to Bay Ridge ^{on} July 20, 1893 with the promise of free ice cream.

With the increase in activities, drawing more and more people to the Church, changes had to be made in the physical plant so that by the summer of 1894, the Infant Department had its Sunday School room enlarged, a house on Hill Street was purchased for the sexton and the exterior appearance of the Church was altered. A metal cornice was hung on the gable facing Hill Street and the squared off windows were restyled to the Gothic design with stained glass windows. Inside the building the Chancel was moved from the South to the East wall where a recess of 32 ft. x 14 ft. was cut. With this change and an extension of 22 ft. in the Nave of the church, along with the addition of a south gallery to correspond to the one at the North end, which was extended 7 ft.

more seating space was allowed so new furniture was added. The organ was repainted and memorials and gifts, which included the internal furnishings of the Church, were secured independent of the regular subscriptions of the people. Many of these gifts are still in the Church building today.

Antique brass eagle lectern - Gift of Rev. Zimmerman and ^afew friends

Two prismatic chandeliers

Antique cast brass candelabra

Marble baptismal font

Antique bronze pulpit

Rods and curtains for choir (in Church)

Organ screen

Brass hand rails in vestibule

Gas brackets

The Church was rededicated October 14, 1894. During this same month, on the 11th day, the Deaconess Society was organized. Seven unmarried women were "set apart" as Parish Sisters of the Church, having ^{on} the badge of ^{the} ~~her~~ office a gold and enamel maltese cross. With a probationary period of two years these ladies reported weekly to the pastor. They were in charge of the altar, service among sick, troubled, wayward children and the poor. They sent "Sunshine Flowers" to the sick and made sunshine visits. They also directed the Christian Kindergarten every Friday evening without cost. Children were taught spiritual and moral ^{truths} ~~culture~~.

By the ^{7th} ~~sixth~~ anniversary held in 1894, there were 915 members.

455 children baptised

176 couples married

212 buried

11,000 visits

more seating space was allowed to new furniture was added. The organ was repaired and remodelled and gifts, which included the interior furnishings of the Church, were secured independent of the regular contributions of the people. Many of these gifts are still in the Church building today.

Antique brass eagle lectern - Gift of Rev. Lindebaum and his friends

Two primitive chandeliers

Antique cast brass candlesticks

Handicrafts from

Antique bronze pulpit

Rods and curtains for choir (in Church)

Organ screen

House hand rails in vestibule

Sanitary

The Church was rededicated October 14, 1894. During this same month, on the 14th day, the Woman's Society was organized. Seven unmarried women were present as parish sisters of the Church, having the badge of the office. A gold and enamel antique cross. With a probationary period of two years these ladies reported weekly to the pastor. They were in charge of the altar, service among the, troubled, wayward children and the poor. They sent "Sinning Flowers" to the sick and made surprise visits. They also directed the Christian kindergarten every Friday evening without cost. Children were taught spiritual and moral values.

By the state anniversary held in 1894, there were 212 members.

125 children baptized

170 couples married

212 buried

11,000 visits

With ever increasing needs and expenditures the parishoners, along with their regular offerings supplemented whenever they could. The Ladies Aid Society continued making money to be used in the church by having bazaars to which were added oyster suppers held at the Cross Street Market Hall. In 1895 at one such supper, held November 12, 13 and 14, the men of the church had a table at the bazaar. Admission and supper at these gatherings was 25¢.

^{for} By the 10th anniversary ^{the} Rev. Zimmerman wrote a souvenir booklet praising the people and their good works and on December 2, 1897 \$1,050 was paid to liquidate the church debt. Indebtedness now ^{was} \$1,200.00 with ground rent of church and parsonage \$135.00 per annum. During these ten years the congregation raised \$49,000 for all purposes, \$4,200.00 of this was for benevolence. ^{the} Rev. Zimmerman said "let no one grow weary in well doing". By the 12th anniversary all debts were again liquidated.

^{at} By the 15th anniversary, held on December 14, 1902, the Pastor, in his sermon, said he worried about the effectiveness of his ministering to the same people for fifteen years. He told how he studied to give good sermons, ~~now he~~ worked in a wider field in the homes of the sick, the bereaved and the dying. He spoke of the hundreds of silent voices "going about doing good". A reception followed. Dr. Zimmerman greeted people for 1½ hours. His worry was needless.

[#] As was earlier stated, the Thank Offering was started in 1888 and in 1904 Rev. Zimmerman mentioned it stating that it was better to give money in this manner than to have the "old time" oyster supper and bazaar. ~~6~~ 609.91 of the Thank offering that year was used to trim the walls of the exterior of the church and put a fence between the lecture room and the blacksmith shop. Also the alley and yard behind the church were repaved. The rest of the offering was used

for the Home for the Aged, to assist the hungry and helpless in the world and to support missionaries.

Not every organization pertained strictly to religion. One group formed in 1903 and still very much alive, was the Men's Bowling League. Dr. Zimmerman felt that the men should get together for a sociable evening once a week for fun and fellowship. Of course, if anyone thought it was too secular, reference was made to the historical notation that bowling was originally a religious ceremony during the 3rd or 4th century in the cloisters of the cathedrals. Parishoners were asked to place a pin at the end of the cloister. When a ball was rolled and a hit was made that indicated the bowler was leading a clean life. A miss called for more faithful attendance in church. Martin Luther himself was an enthusiastic bowler. ~~However,~~ ^{Our} men started with four teams, five on a team and have bowled duck pins, ten pins and back to duck pins in eight different places. The League had a growth to twelve teams in 1940 and is now down to the present eight teams. At one time they even had a paper of their own "The Strike" edited by Geo. C. Emmerich. ^{The first issue was} on December 5, 1926. December 15, 1907 marked the 20th anniversary of this great Christ English Lutheran Church and the beloved pastor, ever encouraging his flock, gave a tribute to them. He spoke about their faithful attendance, stating that "rare was an empty pew during church services, with even the Wednesday night prayer service having large gatherings". He praised the people ^{for} in their diligence in work and worship and commented on how the finances were all being met through weekly envelopes, communion envelopes and thank offering, as well as the plate offering and special gifts. Not all the money was used for the church, part of it going toward hospitals and inner mission work. Each organization was praised. The council was working in "peace and harmony", along with the same treasurer for twenty years, along with "good and faithful secretaries". The Sunday School ^{church} ~~"one great missionary body"~~, in which even the

~~Pastor~~ taught was considered next in importance to the pulpit with an average attendance of 717, the highest being 869 on an April morning; 225 scholars were listed on the honor roll. He thought of the Church and Sunday School as being "banded together for the interest of all worthy causes that channel ^{through the} ~~of~~ church proper".

The Ladies Aid Society was referred to as "a mighty power for good". The Rev. Zimmerman spoke of some people holding that the women should be in the pulpit, but not being one for Women's Lib. he stated that our women had no such aspirations. The Parish Deaconess Society was in charge of the Altar and service to others, finding joy in sacrifice; also conducted Christian Kindergarten every Friday evening.

One strong religious group was Junior Christian Endeavor, organized to teach children of Jesus and his love. Before a child could become a member he was given a trial membership card on which was stated a promise to attend the meetings and to be orderly while present. The calendar for this year 1904 listed this group meeting on Sunday afternoon at 2:30, while the Senior Endeavor, a group to which the former Junior Christian Endeavor members belonged, met on Wednesday evening at 7:30. Both groups developed the Christian character and the enlargement of the sphere of individual influence in Church work.

Groups such as the Ladies Guild, Men's League (held meetings three times a year - January, May and October and ~~they~~ had various programs), Ladies Visiting Committee and the Sunday School Visiting Committee were composed of silent workers who held no meetings ^{had} ~~and~~ no officers, but worked ^{remembering} ~~repeating~~ the Lord's words "What wilt thou have me do"? The choir ~~was~~ under the direction of the director and organist gave the Church music that was "different from all others".

Last but not least were mentioned the ushers who were in charge of the seating of the church goers and the electric light attendant who was "even at his post managing the lighting of the House of God".

The influence of this great body of believers was beginning to be felt around the City of Baltimore. It had a voice among the Lutheran bodies of Maryland. For instance, in 1910 the Laymen's Movement wanted to change the system of getting money from each Lutheran congregation. The Christ Church secretary responded with a note reminding the body that "only seven churches" pay more in apportionment than we do, only four pay more in general benevolence and of the 95 pastorates in the Maryland Synod we are one of 28 who pay in excess of the appropriation". The secretary stated that "we are ready to respond. That we are missionary minded in spirit and deed, but feel we cannot go along with request of changing way of getting money".

The Baltimore City newspapers were aware of the importance of this Church and frequently ran articles about the happenings of the people. On July 17, 1915 a whole page of pictures and captions showed Pastor Zimmerman and his flock of 2,000 (members and friends) gathered at Grove 10 in Druid Hill Park from early morning through twilight, downing 7 bushels of peanuts, 1200 blocks of ice cream and 50 pounds of candy.

In an article appearing in the Baltimore Evening Sun in 1918 entitled, "A Church Downtown Doing Work All Around" it was stated that the purpose of Christ Church was to be as great a blessing as possible to as many people as possible, as long as possible". With these words instilled in the people along with the phrase printed on the announcement cards of Pastor Zimmerman, "every seat free - everybody welcome," Christ Lutheran Church had become so successful that with a benevolence of \$19,358.50 in the year 1918, it had the largest communicant membership of any Lutheran Church in the City of Baltimore.

Feed my sheep -- preach the Word. This was the two fold purpose of the life work of Leander M. Zimmerman, the founder and pastor of Christ Lutheran Church for over 35 years. He was born on August 29, 1860 on a farm in Manchester, Maryland, the youngest of twelve children and the seventh son of a seventh son. After attending rural public school young Leander went on to Gettysburg College and graduated in 1884. Aspiring to be a minister he went ~~on~~ to Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, graduated in 1887 and was ordained in Williamsport, ^{md.} October 8, 1887. His first and only pastorate began when he was called by the Board of Home Missions of the General Synod of the Lutheran Church to organize an English speaking Lutheran Church in South Baltimore. *The young pastor began* ~~After beginning his~~ *in South Balto* work on December 1, 1887 ~~the new pastor was installed on December 2.~~ *7*

The bachelor pastor took up residence at 521 South Hanover Street until April 1, 1905 when he moved a block away to 421 South Hanover Street. For \$12.50 per month (in advance) he had heat and light, sole use of the parlor or front room second floor and use of the bathroom. Calls were answered at the door. His room was cleaned once a week, but the Rev. Zimmerman was obliged to dust his room and make his bed daily. He ate his meals out, many of them in the homes of his parishoners, in fact on Sunday families would vie for the chance to have their pastor as their dinner guest.

To build such a large loyal congregation this eager young man with considerable grace, charm and concentration made over 3400 visitations in his first year as a minister. In just three weeks he had gained enough support to hold his first service. Within a year from the date of beginning his life's work with 400 members his church was self-supporting. His answer to inquiries as to the great accomplishment was "Surely the Lord has led us thus far".

But Leander M. Zimmerman worked for the Lord. He published little booklets every four months, giving the dates and times of services, with the sermon topics for every service; approximately 32 sermon titles in advance. To encourage the people to attend services the pastor sent post cards encouraging his flock to come to church, because even in those early days, distance was a problem. On one card he wrote "you have a long distance to come, but I rejoice that distance has thus far been no barrier to you".

This man of God, who had no secretary and no paid assistant, received a salary of only \$1000.00 per year, with a weeks vacation after Easter and the month of August. He was always an example to the people in church and on the street. His shoes were always shined, there was always a crease in his trousers and his beard (which he grew to make himself look older) was neatly trimmed. He never crossed his legs while sitting in the ^{Church} chancel. While making his rounds he carried a pocket full of candy to give to the neighborhood children, and often on his visits he would leave a house carrying some food or clothing to give to someone along the way. Even on the Sunday School picnics the beloved pastor was surrounded by people.

The Rev. Zimmerman knew the power of the press and used it to his advantage. His sermons from the pulpit reached hundreds of people, while the printed message exposed him to thousands. Newspaper articles by the score were written ^{items} quoting from his sermons. Innumerable press/ and booklets relating to better, cleaner, holier and more helpful lives were written and published by him. Four books - "Cordelia"-a sweet and simple love story, "Dot" - a romance of today (1916), "Sparks" and "Roses Will Bloom Again" were also written by this ambitious young man.

In addition to the work in his own congregation, Pastor Zimmerman was also active in the Maryland Synod of the Lutheran Church. He became President of the Maryland Synod in 1900 and was also for many years President of the ^{Board of the} Lutheran Deaconess Mother ^{house} House in Baltimore, of which he was a founder. He was Vice-President

of the Board of Home Missions and for more than 25 years was a member of the Board of Trustees of Gettysburg Theological Seminary. His progressive spirit, great ability, devotion and strong preaching, which were recognized as being in advance of the age in which he lived, led to Susquehanna University to confer the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity on him in 1901. Later Dr. Zimmerman became a member of the Society of Science, the Letters and Arts of London and the Gettysburg College Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

In 1918 with Christ English Lutheran Church flourishing, the overworked pastor, fearing a physical breakdown, sent a letter of resignation to the Church with the idea of concentrating his Christian efforts as head of the Baltimore Lutheran Inner Mission Society. When the congregation heard of the letter it was shocked. What would Christ Church do without its beloved Pastor?

~~With 4/5 of the congregation of 1800 living in distant parts of the city or the suburbs it was feared that many of the people would stop coming to the Church in he resigned.~~
~~South Baltimore.~~

The Church Council voted to refuse the resignation, but instead gave the pastor periodic vacations to relieve the pressures of his many overwhelming duties. So for seven more years Pastor Zimmerman remained to serve the congregation of almost 2000 - the largest Lutheran Church in Baltimore. But, even with the reduced work load his health was really failing, so on April 19, 1925 after having served his one and only pastorate for ^{over} 35 years the 65 year old Christian giant gave his final sermon to a tearful congregation; 1800 devoted parishoners crowded in the auditorium, galleries and Sunday School rooms.

~~The retired pastor left Baltimore on April 20 for Haddon Hall in Atlantic City~~
~~would be available and~~
~~until a room in a cottage there became his home.~~ With money left to him by one of his physician brothers who had just recently died and a gift of \$5000, in appreciation of his work from a woman in Baltimore, who was not even a member of his congregation, he continued the work of the Lord through his poems and booklets.

The congregation also gave him a pension for life in the amount of \$25,000. Upon his retirement "The Lutheran" issue of May 7, 1925 published an article about him in which he was referred to as "Baltimore's greatest pastor for a generation" and that he was known throughout the country for his books, tracts and articles. In the March 20, 1925 issue of the Baltimore American newspaper an article stated "All Baltimore without regard for creed or race joins in the hope that he may be spared and that to him may be granted strength to continue in his own way to serve God, the country and this community". And in the Baltimore News March 18, 1925 was stated "Dr. Zimmerman's retirement is a real loss to Baltimore. You hear about downtown church problems and how to keep churches going in old sections usually ending in a lament that little can be done. For 37 years he held the battlefront and made his fight. There is no downtown problem when such a man leads the forces of righteousness". Of course, the now aging Pastor continued to serve Christ Church as Pastor Emeritus. He was always present on Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, preaching the 47th consecutive Thanksgiving sermon in November 1934. Even a serious operation during the winter of 1938 could not keep him away for more than a half year. When Dr. Zimmerman was almost 82 years old he underwent another operation in February of 1941, but again was able to return to preach and give his little booklets of poems to his beloved Christian brethren. He preached his last Thanksgiving sermon at Christ Church in 1949, at which time the congregation received the booklet "Lighted Candles". In June 1950 he slipped and fractured the end of his pelvic bone and so he moved into The National Lutheran Home for the Aged in Washington, D. C. Thanksgiving and Anniversary Sundays the congregation of Christ Church was not honored with the ailing Pastor's presence, but heard a transcribed message from him instead. The ^{"Daddy"} old Pastor returned to his Church -- Christ Church -- at ^{almost} 90 years of age, once more on Easter Sunday 1950 when he gave his last sermon.

During Dr. Zimmerman's years of retirement he was especially honored by the members of Christ Church on several of his birthdays. On his 75th in 1935, the people gave \$3000 to beautify the foyer of the Parish House being built, which was named for him. Five years later \$4000 was donated to the Gettysburg Seminary Chapel for the altar and reredos and one year later \$500 more was given for the cross, candlesticks and flower vases, all in the name of Leander M. Zimmerman. A great banquet at the Lord Baltimore Hotel was held for Dr. Zimmerman's 87th birthday, at which time he received a beautiful bound book of greetings and was honored by a gift of \$1500 to The National Lutheran Home for the Aged in Washington and on his 90th ^{birthday} anniversary, at a special sponsored service, \$1379.68 was received from the people.

One year and a half later on March 10, 1952, when this servant of the Lord was in his 92nd year, he "went home to Jesus". More than 4000 people viewed his body with some 1500 people, including the Governor and his wife, pastors, seven of the ten ministerial sons and many deaconesses attending the funeral services. The words of the Pastor of Christ Church, Dr. John L. Deaton, sum up what everyone felt about Dr. Leander M. Zimmerman -- "Our sense of loss is very great, but our hearts are filled with gratitude. God gave us Dr. Zimmerman for a long, long time. Not many are privileged to sojourn on this earth for more than 91 years and still fewer fill their lives with such faithful service for the Lord and Master and the children of man. Through Dr. Zimmerman's ministry, more than that of any other person, God has given us our beloved Church Home. Thousands have been drawn closer to God by his ministry through the spoken and written word. His zeal for the Kingdom was untiring and continued to the very end of his life. Books could be written about his life and ministry".

